T/SOR/49/21

CASTLEMILK FIGHT-BACK NEWS

CASTLEMILK SAVE OUR SERVICES CAMPAIGN

Time for action!

PEOPLE EVERYWHERE are sick of cuts in resources & services. We have heard the pathetic bleating of our Labour councillors that they had to make these cuts and they are having to sack council workers because they have no other option. Well we say they are liars and cowards. They had another option: instead of carrying out the Tories' dirty work, they could have fought back! Everyone knows that the Tory government is on its last legs. It would have been an ideal time to refuse to carry out the Tory cuts, but still our Labour councillors refuse to protect our interests.

We have only one thing to say to these Labour cowards and hypocrites – if you're not going to fight the Tories then **resign!**

To the people of Castlemilk we say its time to stop moaning about the cuts and time to get angry! If the Labour councillors haven't got the will to fight the cuts, then we'll have to do it ourselves.

We would like to encourage everyone not already involved in the Castlemilk Save Our Services campaign to join, and to involve themselves with us in the following direct action.

On Wednesday 2 April we will demonstrate at George Square at 4pm. The Glasgow-wide Save Our Services campaign will hold a 24-hour vigil outside the Chambers building with people staying in tents and sleeping overnight. We will then protest at the full council meeting scheduled for the next day – Thursday 3 April.

Local communities should try and organise feeder marches into the city centre on Tuesday 2 April to arrive at the square for 4pm. If you feel that you are not able to stay overnight in the Square, don't worry, there are still plenty of things you can do. The people in the Square would be happy to receive solidarity visits from you, especially if you bring some sandwiches or a flask of soup!

In the near future we will be encouraging users of local resource centres and facilities threatened with closure to occupy these vital resources. This is not some far-fetched pipe dream, it can be and has been done successfully in the recent past. Remember – don't moan, organise! For further details of how you can join and be involved in the campaign, contact any of the following:

Pat	631 2154
Angie	630 0390
John	634 1126
Phil	631 2448

Support the Anti-Cuts Vigil George Square, 2–3 April

Tory Cuts — Labour Waste

Tory Cuts

NO-ONE should be surprised at the level of local council public spending cuts, inflicted on the people of Scotland. We have suffered this type of treatment for the past 18 years.

It is beyond comprehension to establish how responsibilities such as care in the community can be undertaken if necessary funds are not in place to meet these requirements. It is a simple truth that every service and amenity in Glasgow will suffer as a consequence, the old and the sick most of all.

Labour waste

It is reasonable to expect Glasgow District Council to supply a full explanation of how they can claim difficulty in meeting the required needs of services and amenities, when they can propose such use of public funds as 'celebration banquets', dyeing the river Clyde red to celebrate May day, or refurbishing Glasgow City chambers offices.

It is important to demand an explanation of Glasgow District Council's spending on junkets abroad and limos, when so many services and amenities are struggling to make ends meet.

It is necessary to question the motives of Labour Councillors who strived desperately to enter Glasgow City Chambers with the sole intention of endorsing and implementing Tory Government cuts.

Demand answers

Many Community groups and organisations throughout Glasgow are fighting desperately to prevent the devastating effects these cuts will have on the people of Glasgow. It is reasonable for the people of Glasgow to demand that these cuts are not implemented until all their questions have been answered.

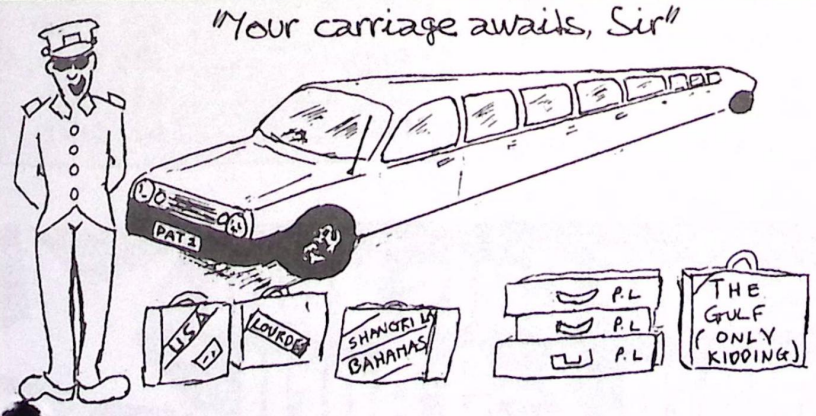
Expect a change

Hope is not yet lost, we can still effect a change in the National and Local Governments' determination to implement these cuts but it needs you to stand up and be counted.

It is unreasonable to expect a handful of people to fight against cuts that will affect every Glasgow citizen.

You can make a difference, by actively taking part in every possible display of protest. Add your voice, your questions, your show of disapproval and most of all your presence.

Demand answers... expect a change



Pat Lally

Basic Allowance		£6,000
Lord Provosts Allowance		£18,540
Junkets '96		
24/5/96 – 5/6/96	Hong Kong/China	£2,621
21/6/96 – 29/6/96	Calgary	£1,242
27/8/96 – 27/8/96	Various	£72
31/8/96 – 9/9/96	Hong Kong	£1,331
8/10/96 – 12/10/96	Bangkok	£1,251
29/11/96 – 6/12/96	Rome/New York	£1,518
	Total cost to us:	**£8,035**

Wake up Castlemilk

ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH, I along with 150 Castlemilk residents attended a meeting to address the issue of threatened public spending cuts. The meeting was particularly emotive as Glasgow's Labour council had just the day before passed a budget which in effect would see 80 million pounds worth of local authority spending slashed.

The residents in Castlemilk are angry as they have already witnessed local provisions being cut such as the Ballantay Resource Centre which housed many different projects such as a Well Woman clinic, a drugs forum, a pensioners group and so on. The closure resulted in many job losses for this area where unemployment is already much higher than the national average. Add to this the nursery closures, community education cutbacks, the closure of the money advice centre, as well as the planned rent and council tax increases. The fact that they were already implemented before the new budget had been set begged the question "What next?" For this reason we were all anxious to ask our elected councillors what was going on. Councillor Christine Devine was the only one who could actually make the meeting. Sadly she was unable to allay anyone's fears, she mostly didn't know what services would be cut.

Unlike the Labour council the people at the meeting demanded **Direct Action**... after all they had elected the Labour council on a mandate to "...tackle deprivation and disadvantage... to regenerate Glasgow's economy... increase job opportunities, improving access to education..." Instead we are faced with even more cuts. 2,000 local authority jobs are threatened from teachers, social work services including home helps, sheltered home wardens and much more. Also Urban Aid Programme projects and Community Work staff, meaning that many projects are faced with the axe.

We have already lost vital services in Castlemilk. We elected a Labour council in the belief that our services would be defended. We already knew that the Tory government would undermine public spendign and implement these cuts. But what was great about the meeting was the unity. I had went to the meeting as an individual feeling unsure and quite depressed about the cuts in vital services, but came out feeling strong. Indeed the apathy was shown not by the residents but the Labour council. They have already passed this scandalous budget which is set to decimate local services and undermine successful projects. Their argument is that their hands are tied, that the Scottish Office (i.e. the Tories) have implemented these cuts so there is nothing they can do but carry them through.

OH NO! say the Castlemilk residents. We will unite to defend our services and force the Labour council to carry out what they were elected to do – **serve our interests and stop the cuts now!** This was the general feeling of the meeting and the **Castlemilk Save Our Services Campaign** has been established. The only way forward is to build on the success and strength witnessed at the meeting. For this reason it is vital the residents of Castlemilk unite and join with other areas in Glasgow to take **direct action to defend our services**.

We can do it! Come along to the public meeting and lend your shoulder to the wheel – after all, it is our services.

Catherine Milligan

• *Any similarity to the City Council is entirely co-incidental*

What we are about

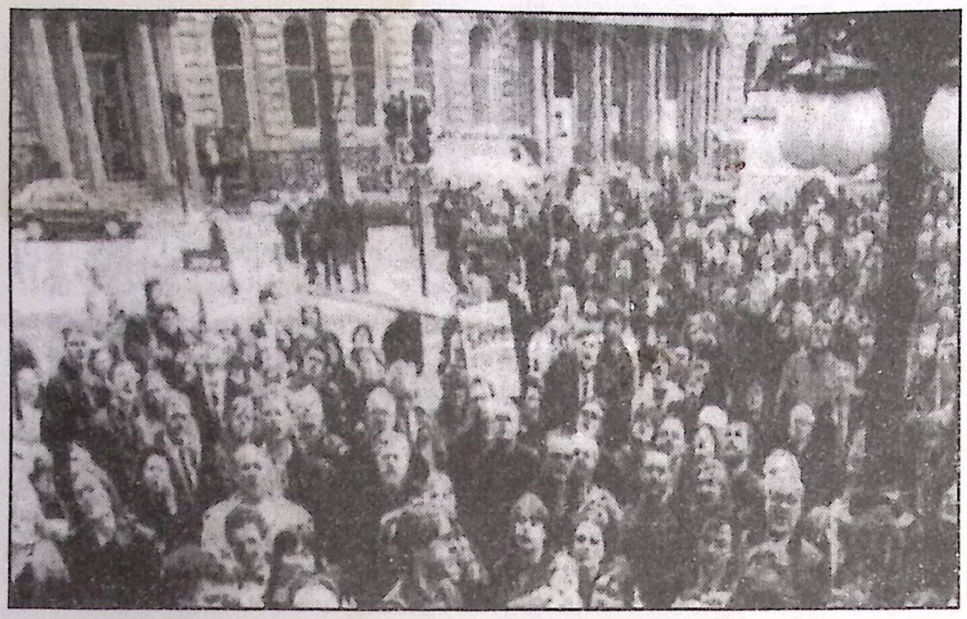
ON 10 MARCH A CO-ORDINATING GROUP MEETING was held in the Jeely Piece Centre, Arnprior Road, attended by eight people. This meeting resulted from a previous public meeting organised by the trade union UNISON in an effort to galvanise the Castlemilk community into joining together with other communities in the fight back against the cuts in jobs and services in Glasgow. Make no mistake, these cuts are a vindictive attack on every aspect of community life. Worse still, although this emanates from a Tory government via the Scottish Office, they are being implemented by the vast majority of councillors most of whom *belong to the Labour Party*, the supposed defenders of working class people. They have behaved in a spineless and despicable manner and, instead of fighting alongside us and on our behalf, hide behind the excuse of: *It's the Tories' fault.*

The cuts don't affect some of us – they affect all of us. Those in jobs providing a service, those who depend on the service and the rest of the community whose interests lie in a society which provides caring facilities in health, education, nursery care or any other facility which benefits us.

The co-ordinating group is open to all who wish to be a part of it. We would welcome suggestions or ideas written or oral, but most important we need **your presence**.

Democracy in Action

What *really* happened at George Square



ONE BIG PUSH and we were in – the two polis on the gate left standing as 20 odd of us charged into the City Chambers on Sunday night. A mad dash up the stairs, and the next thing we were barricading the precious antique doors of the City Chambers – the people had reclaimed their building!

Despite what the media may have printed on the basis of quotes from Tory and Labour councillors unamused at being ousted from "their" chambers, this was not mob rule. Those of us who went into the Chambers on Sunday night were not violent thugs, nor were the thousands who came out onto the streets on Monday. We are ordinary people, angry at an elected council who claim to represent us, yet voted for £80.7m cuts and 1,500 redundancies, devastating our communities.

Rapidly overcoming a fear of heights, we took to the balcony, waiting for the doors to be broken down and expecting to spend the night in the slightly less plush surroundings of Stewart Street. By morning, though, we were there for the duration, and there was no way a single councillor would be taking their seat in either the Chamber or their alternative, the banqueting hall, which had also been barricaded.

Breakfast was airlifted in on a bit of string as we took the best seats in the house to watch the "battle of George Square". The crowd down below was rapidly growing as thousands of council workers walked out on unofficial, illegal strikes to blockade the Chambers.

By lunchtime, with time running out for the Council's 2pm meeting, only a handful of spineless Councillors had slipped past the pickets, and their chances of setting a legal budget seemed to be slipping away. If they did not succeed, they would be forced into illegality, seriously embarrassing for the Council.

When the council leaders set the fire alarm off, there was no way we were shifting. Unfortunately, it gave the Council the opportunity to smuggle a few more of our "representatives" into the building, and the meeting went ahead, in a small Committee room hidden well away from any citizens who might have cared to have a say.

All those in the occupation and out in the Square were furious when we heard that the Council's budget had been passed. So much for their "regret" – those councillors were hell-bent on getting to that meeting. Although we were allowed to leave en masse to join the crowd, three people had been arrested on the Sunday night as we went in, and disgracefully one, Tam Dymond, has been remanded for 3 weeks.

Don't believe the lies the papers tell you, and don't forget the shame-faced councillors who closed down our communities. This wasn't the first occupation and it certainly won't be the last – its time to stand up and fight back.

Pamela Currie
Scottish Socialist Alliance Students

Fight the Cuts

The common market's booming,
the foodstuff piles and gluts,
The ones who said, Don't be afraid,
are introducing CUTS.

The pound rate keeps on falling,
the trend goes down in spurts,
We're in the red, and being bled,
by economic CUTS.

They're cutting education,
the school and college shuts,
And now instead of being well read,
they're introducing CUTS.

They're cutting back house building,
to caravans and huts,
The future's dead for newly weds,
through introducing CUTS.

They're cutting back mad cows
disease,
to soya beans and nuts,
And tho' you dread being junk food
fed,
they're introducing CUTS.

And that VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY,
the Tory health care slut,
She schemed and lied, as patients
died,
thro' Tory health care CUTS.

And as for PHONEY BLAIR,
he hasn't any guts,
He'll creep and crawl, He'll bluff and
stall,
But has not done a thing at all,
To fight the Tory CUTS.

THEY borrowed thirty Billions,
to balance budgets, But,
I heard it said, the interest's spread,
For years, and years, and years
ahead,
by that time friend, we'll all be
dead;
OUR BIRTH-RIGHTS SOLD FOR
FOREIGN AID,
And economic CUTS.

Eddie Graham